



Senate Judiciary Committee Approves Feinstein Bill to Limit
Supply of Chemical Used to Produce Methamphetamine
October 4, 2004

Washington, DC – The U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee today approved legislation sponsored by Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) that would make it harder for illicit drug manufacturers to obtain large quantities of a cold medicine ingredient used to make methamphetamine.

Under current law, 9 grams of pseudoephedrine (an ingredient found in cold medicine) can be purchased in bottles at one time, but there is no limit to the amount which can be purchased in blister packs. This is known as the “blister pack loophole” and has been exploited by methamphetamine manufacturers to easily obtain thousands of grams of pseudoephedrine.

The bill approved by the Judiciary Committee would close the ‘blister pack loophole’ and set a 9 gram standard for all pseudoephedrine, whether purchased in a bottle or obtained in a blister pack. This will still allow consumers to purchase weeks or months worth of cold medicine at once, but will prevent large-scale purchases by meth dealers.

“California is known as the ‘source country’ for meth, producing roughly 80 percent of the nation's supply,” Senator Feinstein said. **“It is time that we begin to dry up the supply of the chemicals used to produce meth.”**

“The ‘blister pack loophole’ has allowed meth dealers a free hand to produce vast quantities of the drug,” Senator Feinstein said. **“We need to bring production of the drug under control. This legislation is a serious attempt to limit the availability of pseudoephedrine, and I want to thank my colleagues for approving it. I know there are still some hurdles to clear, but this is an important step toward closing this loophole.”**

Once predominantly found the U.S. Southwest, methamphetamine's presence now stretches from coast to coast and extends from the nation's smallest towns to its largest cities.

Senator Feinstein has long been a leader in the fight against the production and distribution of methamphetamine. Senator Feinstein was instrumental in establishing the Central Valley High-Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) task force, and securing four additional DEA agents to staff the HIDTA.

She also co-authored the Comprehensive Methamphetamine Control Act of 1996, which restricted access to certain precursor chemicals used in making methamphetamine and substantially increased penalties for the sale and possessions of chemicals or equipment used to make methamphetamine.

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